

Amendments to the Drawings:

Figure 1 has been amended to show the lateral beads 22 and 23, and to label all the bosses shown with numeral 18. Figure 8 has been amended to relabel the lines “A-A” and “B-B” as “9-9” and “10-10”, respectively.

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 1, 5, 7, 10-12 and 15 have been amended. Claim 6 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 7 has been amended to change its dependency. At least claims 10, 12 and 15 have been amended only in a formal way, without narrowing their scope. New claims 16 and 17 have been added. No new matter has been added.

This amendment changes, deletes and adds claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-5 and 7-17 are now pending in this application.

Drawings

The drawings were objected to. Figure 1 has been amended to show the lateral beads 22 and 23. The longitudinal beads 21 would not be seen in the view shown in Figure 1, and thus are not labeled. Figure 8 has been amended to relabel the lines "A-A" and "B-B" as "9-9" and "10-10", respectively, as suggested in the Office Action. Applicants submit that the drawing objections have been overcome.

Claim objections

Claim 10 was objected to for informalities. Claim 10 has been amended as suggested in the Office Action, thus overcoming the objection thereto.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,402,189 to Gray et al. ("Gray"). Claims 1-4 and 11-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,961,142 to Shiraki et al. ("Shiraki") in view of U.S. Patent 6,299,198 to Nakashima et al. ("Nakashima"). Claims 5 and 9 were rejected under 35

U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiraki in view of Gray. Claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiraki in view of Gray, and further in view of Nakashima. Claims 10 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiraki in view of Nakashima, and further in view of Gray. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites “the door body portion of said holding door includes a longitudinal bead extending from the hinge portion side to the leading end side of the door body portion and a lateral bead which is positioned between said hinge portion and an installation portion to said boss portion disposed in the vicinity of the hinge portion and is extended along said hinge portion, and said lateral bead and said longitudinal bead are constructed to be crossed to prevent damage upon a fixed state between the airbag lid and the door body portion in the vicinity of the hinge portion when an airbag of said airbag apparatus is expanded.” The Office Action relies on Shiraki for disclosing the lateral and longitudinal beads of claim 1. Shiraki, however, fails to disclose the above recited feature of claim 1.

Even if the linear protrusions 50a of Shiraki, which the Office Action equates with the beads as recited in claim 1, could be considered to be beads, Shiraki still does not suggest the arrangement of beads as recited in claim 1 where “said lateral bead and said longitudinal bead are constructed to be crossed to prevent damage upon a fixed state between the airbag lid and the door body portion in the vicinity of the hinge portion when an airbag of said airbag apparatus is expanded.” Shiraki discloses the linear protrusions 50a to be arranged in a lattice pattern and disposed away from the bent part 49, which the Office Action equates with the hinge as recited in claim 1. In the Shiraki system, the protrusions 50a are not arranged to prevent damage upon a fixed state between the door core 41 and frame 31 in the vicinity of the bent part 49 (hinge portion), when an airbag of the airbag apparatus is expanded. Rather the protrusions are arranged so as to merely reinforce the door core 41 (See col. 3, lines 41-44). Thus, even if Shiraki and Nakashima and/or Gray, were combined, the resultant airbag door apparatus would not include all the features of claim 1.

Independent claims 5 and 11 respectively recite “the door body portion of said holding door includes a longitudinal bead extending from the hinge portion side to the leading end side of the door body portion and a first lateral bead which is positioned between said hinge portion and an installation portion to said boss disposed in the vicinity of the hinge portion and is extended along said hinge portion, and said lateral bead and said longitudinal bead are constructed to be crossed to prevent damage upon a fixed state between the airbag lid and the door body portion in the vicinity of the hinge portion when an airbag of said airbag apparatus is expanded” and “the door body portion of said holding door includes a longitudinal bead extending from the hinge portion side to the leading end side of the door body portion and a first lateral bead which is positioned between said hinge portion and a second installation portion to said boss disposed in the vicinity of the hinge portion and is extended along said hinge portion, and said first lateral bead and said longitudinal bead are substantially crossed to prevent damage upon a fixed state between the airbag lid and the door body portion in the vicinity of the hinge portion when an airbag of said airbag apparatus is expanded”, and are thus patentable for reasons analogous to claim 1.

Gray and Nakashima were cited for disclosing other features of the claims, but fail to cure the deficiencies of Shiraki.

The dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as their respective independent claims, as well as for further patentable features recited therein. For example, new claim 17 recites “wherein an edge portion of the door body portion of the holding door is arranged to press a position of the airbag lid from the back surface thereof which is apart from the fragile line, so that a tension force acts on the fragile line and then the fragile line is broken by the tension force when the airbag body is expanded”, a feature not suggested by the references applied in the rejection of the claims.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

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By

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FIG. 1

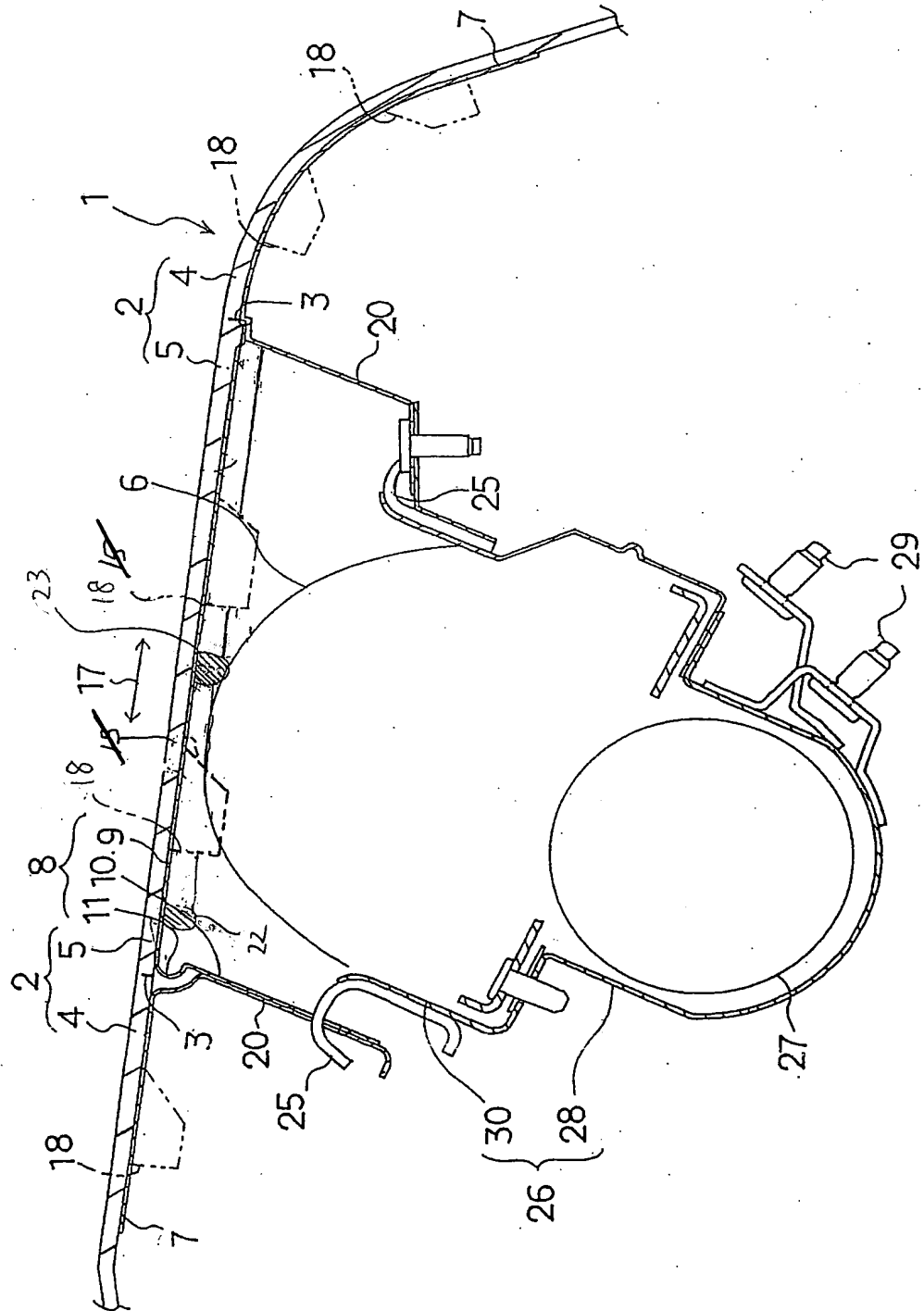


FIG. 8

